

snapped his fingers, and burst into a long continued roar of laughter.

"Why, Andrews! what is the meaning of all this?"

"You will know that by and bye," said John, laughing afresh; "don't I look jolly!"

"Yes! quite different to the appearance you cut yesterday; you looked like a lamb going to the slaughter."

"To-day! I feel like a lion, going forth to conquer," cried Andrews. "I will see if I cannot outwit that old gentleman, in my dream."

"You speak in riddles."

"No wonder; I have been a riddle to myself for the last fortnight. I have only just recovered my senses; so you must excuse me for playing the fool a little on such a joyful occasion."

John had now adjusted his toilet; and he looked a smart dashing fellow, fit to carry by storm the heart of widow or maid.

"Am I not too handsome for that old shrewd devil!" he cried, glancing at his fine person in the glass. "Answer me that, Ben."

"Tut, man! you have forgotten the seventy thousand pounds, and contingencies."

"That's the bright side of the picture. I was looking at the reverse," returned the bridegroom. "I wonder what my charming Polly is thinking of this morning, and how she looks—"

"She never drinks, and seldom swears, Now is not that a pleasure?"

"Don't go on this mad way, Andrews. One would think you were tipsy."

"Drunk with anticipation and delight, Ben. Do let a poor fellow enjoy himself while he can. The dull days are coming, when he cannot work. The dark nights are coming, when he cannot sleep. Let me laugh while I can; and drive away care."

Ben Boyce seriously thought that his poor friend had lost his senses; for he saw nothing so very terrible in a man marrying an ugly woman, who had seventy thousand pounds to begin the world with.

They now proceeded arm in arm, to the house of the bride. Miss Polly received them, with a singular contortion of face, which was meant for a smile, and this contortion almost became a spasm, when she glanced at the fine manly figure of her future husband. She was dressed in the identical fawn-colored silk, and white veil, which she had worn in his dream, and John thought that the substance appeared far more frightful in its dark reality, than the shadow. He gazed upon her steadily—the first time he had ever done so to her, and a half smothered laugh escaped from his lips.

"You seem in good spirits to-day, Mr. Andrews," said the bride.

"How could it be otherwise, my dear Mary," returned the bridegroom, turning his head partly away, to conceal the roguish smile which gave the lie to his homed words.

Miss Lydia was dying with spite and envy; but she was to be her sister's brides-maid, and was dressed very gaily for the occasion. Mrs. Boyce made one of the party, and Ben was to act as daddy, and give the bride—poor timid young thing—away.

They then proceeded in the following order to church, the whole town turning out its population to see them pass. First came Ben Boyce, leading the bride, then followed the bridegroom, supporting upon his arms, Miss Lydia and Mrs. Boyce. Three uglier women never proceeded on such an errand to the hymeneal altar. Nor were admirers wanting, on their way thither.

"Here come the three graces!" shouted one graceless lad, the son of the clergyman of the parish, who should have known better. "That is Venus in the middle," cried another. "That's a man. Venus was a man," said a third. "Why, he's the only good looking one among them. The bride should have given him her petticoats," suggested a fourth.

"Is the man mad?" shouted a fifth. "Hush! he's money sick. Gold pills ain't bad to swallow. I wish he'd give me a few of them," said another voice. "He'll want them all, to sweeten that bitter cup," said a grave, grey-headed man.

Now, this was gall and wormwood to poor Andrews, who rather piqued himself upon his popularity. He felt dreadfully ashamed of his present degraded position; and really longed to knock all the impertinent boys on the head, but he held his peace, and the party entered the church.

The ceremony proceeded, and all went on very smoothly, until the clergyman, with a half-suppressed smile, demanded of Andrews: "Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife?" There was a long pause. Ben gave the bridegroom an admonitory jog of the elbow. Still, no answer. The bride turned her eyes upon her spouse, but she squinted so awfully that he thought she was looking out of the window. The clergyman frowned, but thinking the young man might be deaf, he repeated the question, commencing with: "Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife?"

"No, sir! I cannot," said Andrews, respectfully. "I thought I could, but it was all a delusion of Satan. I am sorry to disappoint the lady; but there is no forcing nature."

A shriek of rage and disappointment from the